1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir AV1

one whose boundary with the Outer Hills is so well defined as is the case on the east.

As so much time has been spent over the eastern tract, I will now do little more than point out where on the west similar spaces occur.

Just west of the Chinâb, behind Paunî, a ridge, which corresponds to the one we traced as far as that river from the east, rises suddenly and towers above the Outer Hills which lie to the south of it. This is called Dragart Thâr, being sacred to a devta whose name is Dragar. The south face of it is a great escarpment; it has a line of precipitous limestone cliffs, of which the part vertical is about 1000 feet, and far down beneath that a talus-slope continues; the ridge is narrow and the ground inclines quickly, but not precipitously, down to the north.

Looking in that direction from the summit, we get a general view of this mountain-tract which shows it to have the same characters as that around Râmban and Bhadarwâh. We see a number of ridges, some parallel for a short distance, some branching, spreading out in innumerable spurs in every direction. The lower parts are dotted with chil-trees and with patches, or, as they appear in the distance, specks of cultivated ground. The higher ridges bear thick forest of the other pine. These mountains are in the tract called Budil, which is drained by the Ans River. I have never been over it, but, from accounts, believe it to be very similar to what was described behind Râmban, and to have for inhabitants the same Pahârî race. Beyond appears the snowy Panjâl, the southern boundary of Kashmir, which at this part is a complete ridge, nowhere broken by a gap, only jagged by rocky peaks standing up out of the snowy mass. In the beginning of May, when I saw the range from this spot, snow was covering a great vertical height of the mountains, but by August or September all melts away, except a few beds that have collected to a thickness by snow-slips.

The neighbourhood around Dragart Thâr produces iron, which is smelted by the caste called *Dhâyâr*. These men, at the starting of a new furnace or the beginning of any other important business, go to a spot on the ridge where there is an altar raised

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326 to the devta Dragar, and there sacrifice. They kill a goat
776 and burn some ghi before the altar. The ghi burnt, they eat
782 the goat themselves, not, I think, sparing even the head to the flames. The iron spoon the ghi was burnt in is left. There were something like a hundred iron spoons accumulated, and around some iron tridents were placed, and a collection of strangely-shaped stones.

138 The next part that I know of these mountains is the country between Rājkot and the Pīr Panjāl Pass. If we leave the main road to Kashmir and go up the Darhāl valley, we find ourselves at first between hills of the character of those which we have classed as "Outer Hills," but in about six miles they take the character of those of the "Pahār;" this is partly due to change of geological formation—for we have here come upon older rocks—and partly to increased height. The slopes are more continuous; they are unbroken by parallel jutting beds; their surface is better suited for the growth of forest trees. At the village called Bari Darhāl, a few miles farther up, we are quite among mountains of this kind; they are all clothed with thick wood, in the lower part of deciduous trees, while, above, the forest suddenly changes to fir, which extends far up the slope till replaced at the last by birch. These mountains belong to the Ratan Ridge, which not far from here branches from the Panjāl Range; the ridge itself, with its spurs and the space included between it and the high range, extending towards Pūnch, make another wide tract of "Middle Mountains." We shall come again to the Ratan Ridge on our march to Kashmir.

There is another long ridge, similar in many respects to the Ratan Ridge. It branches off from the Panjāl Range farther to the north-west, and runs in a general way from east to west, for 50 miles straight, or nearly 70 measured along its course. This, with its branches and spurs, occupies an area between the latitude parallel of Pūnch and the Jhelam river, which area also we must count to belong to the tract.

Woodcarving is practised at many places, and that turned out at Bijbihara is especially noted. The work is artistic, but suffers from the fact that the Kashmiri is a bad carpenter. Lacquered wood-work is produced at Kulgam. Woollen cloth (pattu) is woven all over the State, the best work being produced in the north, while the finished product of the south is especially famous. Blankets are made in many places, and sometimes fetch Rs. 25 a piece. The blacksmiths are very skilful, and some have been able to make surgical instruments and repair gun-locks. The city of Srinagar is noted for its silver, copper, wood-carving, and lacquer. The shawl and paper industries are almost extinct, but many of the shawl-workers have become expert weavers of carpets or have taken to embroidering felts. Good embroidery is also turned out at Islamabad. An industry started very recently, in connexion with the development of sericulture, is the weaving of silk cloth. In 1906 about 100 looms of improved pattern were imported and set up.

Commerce and trade. Up to quite recent times Kashmir was almost a self-supporting country, and the chief imports--piece-goods, metals, salt, sugar, tea, and tobacco--were of modest dimensions. Before the opening of the cart-road from Rawalpindi to Baramula in 1890, the trade was carried by Kashmiris who went down every winter to work in the Punjab, and brought back domestic requisites, or by the professional muleteers,or by Punjabi bullock-drivers. There were three trade routes. The most direct crossed the Banihal pass and ran to Jammu, the railway terminus; the most popular route followed the old imperial road over the Pir Panjal, reaching the railway at Gujrat; and the third was known as the Jhelum valley road, which is now the cart-road and the main line of communication with the Punjab.

In 1892-3 the total imports from India were valued at 48.7 lakhs. In 1902-3 the imports reached 118 lakhs, but the trade of that and later years was greatly impaired by the prevalence of plague in the Punjab. In 1904-5 the total value was 115 lakhs. The table on the next page shows the value of the more important imports in the years chosen for comparison.

There can be little doubt that Kashmir has increased enormously in prosperity of late years. The land revenue settlement has turned the agricultural classes from serfs into well-to-do peasants, and their wealth is reflected in their increased purchases. The increase in the import of salt is especially satisfactory, as in 1892 it was shown that the annual average of consumption in Kashmir was exactly half of that prevailing in the Punjab.